

Report in the MORNING POST Newspaper.

ENTERTAINMENT AT FISHMONGERS' HALL.

The ancient Company of Fishmongers entertained General Garibaldi in their splendid hall last evening at a banquet singular for its taste and excellence, even amid the usual magnificence of the City hospitalities, on which occasion the freedom of the Company was presented to him.

The guests invited began to arrive shortly after five o'clock, at which time a large crowd had collected in front of the building, and it required the exertions of a strong body of the City police to preserve sufficient space for the carriages to set down their occupants. The windows of the opposite houses were crammed with persons anxious to witness the General alight, and many favoured individuals were permitted to enter the vestibule of the hall, where at all events they could have a momentary glimpse of his features as he passed. The Grenadiers' band, under the direction of Mr. D. Godfrey, were also stationed in the entrance-hall, where they performed several pieces of music before the arrival of the General. The noble staircase leading to the great hall was decorated with exotics and other flowers; and many banners, both English and Italian, draped its polished marble columns. The windows of the reception-room, overlooking the bridge, were eagerly seized upon by the earliest visitors as positions from which they could see the General drive up, and watch the gradually-increasing excitement of the crowd below. Shortly before six o'clock the cheers and shouts outside announced the arrival of the chief guest, and the now familiar air of "The Garibaldi Hymn" was played by the band as he entered and ascended the staircase, preceded by the Prime Warden and other officials, who had received him on alighting. On entering the reception-room, the General, who was loudly applauded, cordially saluted the company, who made way for him to proceed to the upper end of the room, where he took a seat. Several introductions then took place, but there was an entire absence of anything like unseemly crowding or the exhibition of impertinent curiosity. A considerable delay occurred after the entrance of the General, in consequence of the late arrival of some of the distinguished guests invited to meet him, and it was nearly seven o'clock before the dinner was announced. The fine hall of the Company was simply decorated with the Italian and Garibaldi colours, with the national standard on either side of her Majesty's portrait, so as not to detract from the extremely tasteful appearance of the tables, which were laid out *à la Russe*—fruit and flowers in rare china and plate alone being placed on the cloth. Shortly before seven the guests entered the hall, General Garibaldi leading her Grace the Dowager Duchess of Sutherland, who took her seat on his right, he himself sitting on the right of the Prime Warden, who occupied the chair.

On the left of the Chairman sat the Duchess of Sutherland, the Duke and Duchess of Argyll, and others. About 150 guests sat down to dinner, among whom were *—

The Earl and Countess of Shaftesbury, Vice-Chancellor Sir William Page Wood and Lady Wood, Sir Rowland and Lady Hill, Lady Easthope, Sir S. M. Peto, Bart., M.P., and Lady Peto, Sir Edward Dering, Bart., M.P., the Dean of Ripon, Miss Cust and Mrs. Goode, Dr. Guerzoni, Colonel and Mrs. Chambers, Colonel Elsoy, Mr. Charles

* Some of the guests here named were present at the Evening Reception only.

Seely, M.P., Major Snell, Captain Forbes, R.A., Captain Robert and Mrs. Richardson, Alderman and Miss Lawrence, Mr. and Mrs. C. C. Trevor, Mr., Mrs., and Miss Wykeham Martin, Mr. and Mrs. C. D. Loveless, Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Lewis, Mr. J. J. Tweed, Mr. Barnes, M.P., Mr. S. Olding, The Chairman of the Union Society,* Mr. and Mrs. P. Northall Laurie, Mr. F. Leighton, Captain Grant, Mr. Fenton (Deputy-Chairman Great Western Railway Company), Mr. R. G. Underdown, &c.

Grace having been said by the chaplain of the Company, the dinner, which was then served, was far above the ordinary quality, and reflected the greatest credit upon Messrs. Ring and Brymer, who furnished it. On the cloth being drawn the guests were invited by Mr. Harker, the toastmaster, in his inimitable style, to drink the loving cup, and much good-natured merriment was occasioned by the perplexity of General Garibaldi, who evidently did not understand the proceeding when the massive silver-gilt goblet was placed in his hand, and it was not until after repeated explanations that he could be persuaded to drink first, and then hand the vessel to the Dowager Duchess of Sutherland.

The CHAIRMAN, in rising to propose the first toast, said: Ladies, my lords, and gentlemen,—I understand that our illustrious guest is very wisely fond of early hours, and it has therefore been arranged that the first toasts presented to you shall not be introduced by any long speeches. I shall therefore only say, in proposing "the health of her Majesty the Queen," that it is sometimes regarded as a formal toast, but that such is not its character in Fishmongers' Hall, where it is the expression of devoted loyalty to her Majesty. (*Loud cheers.*) I may add that I feel confident that the country will most gladly submit to any deprivation which may be necessary for the restoration and the preservation of the health of her Majesty, so invaluable to the nation. I have much pleasure in proposing "The health of her Majesty the Queen." (*Loud cheers.*)

The toast was drunk with three times three.

The CHAIRMAN then simply proposed "The health of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales—a fellow Fishmonger—(*loud cheers*)—the Princess of Wales, and the rest of the Royal Family."

The toast was warmly received.

The CHAIRMAN, in giving the next toast, said: Ladies, my lords, and gentlemen,—The next toast I have to propose is that of "the Army, the Navy, and the Volunteers." (*Cheers.*) I shall only say in reference to this toast, that our illustrious guest has said that without the British fleet he could never have passed the Straits of Messina. (*Loud cheers.*)

The toast having been duly honoured,

The CHAIRMAN rose and said:—Ladies, my lords, and gentlemen,—I will now propose to you that which is in every sense the toast of the evening—"The health of our illustrious guest, General Garibaldi." (*Loud and prolonged cheering.*) I do not anticipate that any words I can offer will be so gratifying to the General as the kind expression of your feelings that you have just given. (*Cheers.*) In the few words which I shall offer I beg to state that it is not proposed that this should be considered as a meeting for making any

* Read "Union Insurance Society, Mr. Gilpin."

political demonstration, or that it is desired to indicate or to draw forth any expression of opinion upon any of the questions that have been agitated or are to be agitated in reference to Italy. (*Hear, hear.*) It is wished merely to be an occasion of evincing our unanimous appreciation of the high qualities of General Garibaldi and our admiration of his character as a hero, as a patriot, and an enlightened and consistent supporter of liberty in every sense. (*Cheers.*) It is not that we are indifferent to any questions affecting Italy, for we take the deepest and warmest interest in everything that concerns that great and glorious country. I and all others are fully capable of feeling the glorious beauties of nature and of art surrounding Naples, Florence, and Rome, and of appreciating Italy's heart-stirring poetry;* and, without going back to classic times, with regard to the past I need only refer to Dante, Tasso, Raphael, and Michael Angelo, as men who have added to the glories of their country. (*Hear, hear.*) I need not go back even so far, for the name I am about to mention will be immortally connected with Italian history, and will be carried down from age to age as an honour to that country. (*Cheers.*) I shall not venture to offer any lengthened expression of the claims which General Garibaldi has upon our admiration and esteem. You know, as Europe, as the world knows, that he has achieved deeds scarcely paralleled, I may almost say unparalleled, either in ancient or modern times. (*Cheers.*) We have seen him carry out operations of the greatest importance, by which he has achieved that which is a more lasting benefit to his country than was accomplished by all the deeds of the great Napoleon with all his vast armies. (*Cheers.*) We have seen him in a position of supreme power, and, possessed of the wealth connected with such power, surrender that power and that wealth into other hands because he thought it would be more beneficial to his country that he should do so. (*Loud cheers.*) In the General's eye he himself is nothing, his country is everything. (*Cheers.*) There is one incident in the career of the General I should like to mention, as most interesting to us as British subjects and Protestants. When I was in Naples last year, I found that an English Protestant church was being built there upon a site given by General Garibaldi, and the effect of the terms of the decree granting that site were as follows:—"Grateful for the powerful and the generous sympathy of England, the Dictator considers it but a slight return for so many benefits received from them, to decree that not only shall permission be given to build a church within this capital to those who worship the same God as the Italians, but they are requested to accept, as a national gift, the small piece of land on which such church is proposed to be built." (*Loud cheers.*) Now, the value of that small piece of land is no less than £2,000. (*Loud cheers.*) Under these circumstances, you will doubtless agree with me that General Garibaldi, after expressing such kindness and good feeling towards this country and the Church to which we belong, deserves the warmest expressions of our sympathy and admiration. (*Loud cheers.*) He has been heartily welcomed by the great, who have received him into their palaces, and by the poor, who have gladly pressed round to offer him their homage, and he has been welcomed this evening by the ladies and the visitors now in this hall, and he has well earned their admiration. (*Loud cheers.*) I will now only ask you to drink to the health of one who has proved himself a true patriot and a friend to the cause of civil and religious liberty. I am sure you will drink cordially to "The health of General Garibaldi."

* Read "All who, like myself, have seen the glories of nature and of art around and in Naples, Florence, and Rome, and have read any of its heart-stirring poetry, must love Italy."

The toast was drunk with three times three, amid loud and prolonged cheering, again and again renewed.

General GARIBALDI, who was received with great warmth, in responding, said—I feel myself under a deep obligation to give my thanks to the noble Fishmongers' Company, and to the noble man, the Prime Warden, who represents all the Company. When in Naples, I expressed my feelings of gratitude for the sympathy of the English nation. (*Cheers.*) Now, I am happy and proud to be able in person to express the same feeling to the representatives of this noble nation. I pray you to accompany me in a toast, to show my respect and gratitude for all the benefits I have received from England, and particularly for the sympathy which has been shown under every circumstance for my country. (*Cheers.*) Then I propose "The health of England—Freedom's country, and the hope of the slaves of the world!" (*Loud cheers.*)

The CHAIRMAN said the next toast he had to propose was that of "The Honorary Members," among whom they were proud to reckon many illustrious names. With the toast he begged to couple the name of the "Earl of Shaftesbury."

The Earl of SHAFTESBURY, in responding, said—The honorary members have so often, both individually and collectively, expressed their thanks to this great company on occasions such as these, that I need not enlarge upon any topics in relation to that matter, but on the present occasion we see our honorary membership is converted into something real by being coupled with the illustrious and beloved name of General Garibaldi. (*Loud cheers.*) Of that name no man for a long time to come will be able to speak without emotion. He is a man who represents in himself all the virtues and qualities that adorn mankind. (*Hear, hear.*) He is disinterested in the highest sense of the word; he is imbued with the loftiest patriotism, yet he is of the most modest character, while he is most majestic in his demeanour. And how does all this arise? Not simply from a great and commanding intellect, but from what God has given him—an immense and a feeling heart, so great that in describing it we must refer to the words of Scripture, such a heart as was given to Solomon, "a heart large as the sands of the sea." (*Loud cheers.*) On the part of the honorary members I can only thank you for the opportunity you have afforded us of meeting this great, this clear, and beloved man, and of expressing our admiration of his character, his honour, and his virtues. (*Loud cheers.*) His name will, I am sure, be for long a household word in every heart and in every home of the British empire. (*Loud and prolonged cheering.*)

General GARIBALDI then rose and said—I propose the toast of "Prosperity to the Fishmongers' Company."

The toast was drunk with three times three.

The PRIME WARDEN, in responding, said it would in future always be the pride of the Fishmongers' Company that their prosperity had been proposed by so illustrious a man, to whom they proposed to offer the freedom of their guild. He begged to propose "The health of the Ladies" who had honoured them with their presence on that occasion. None of her Majesty's subjects more warmly appreciated the gallant deeds of General Garibaldi than did the ladies of this country. He begged to propose "The health of the Dowager Duchess of Sutherland, the Duchess of Sutherland, the Duchess of Argyll, and the ladies."

The toast having been loudly applauded,

The Duke of ARGYLL responded, and said it had been the pride and pleasure of the ladies of this country to have been able to associate themselves with the reception which had been given by all classes of the people to the extraordinary and illustrious man who was their guest on that occasion. (*Loud cheers.*) They admired him, first, because he had accomplished the perfect and complete freedom of the Italian people; and secondly, because of their admiration of his extraordinary and singularly pure and noble character. (*Cheers.*)

The ladies then withdrew.

The CHAIRMAN briefly proposed "Prosperity to Italy," and stated his belief that everything that conduced to the happiness and glory of Italy would meet with the warmest approbation from Englishmen.

The toast was drunk amid loud cheers, and cries of "Viva Italia!"

The CHAIRMAN then proposed "The Visitors," coupled with the health of Vice-Chancellor Wood.

Vice-Chancellor Wood, in reply, acknowledged the great pleasure the visitors had experienced in meeting General Garibaldi that evening.

[The following is believed to be an accurate report of the response of the Vice-Chancellor:—

"Mr. Prime Warden, my lords, ladies, and gentlemen,—The Prime Warden has referred to a circumstance which renders my duty painful to me. The toast to which he has desired me to respond was originally intended to be coupled with the names of the two sons of our illustrious guest; and I deeply regret the accidental absence of those scions of a house which, as the Prime Warden has already said, will henceforth be one of the most distinguished in Italy.

"We have already, in a preceding toast, wished all prosperity to that most beautiful country. It has been the happy lot of General Garibaldi to do more than almost any other man towards achieving that prosperity and insuring its duration. A distinguished poet of that land of poetry (Filicaja),* in his pathetic sonnet commencing with

"Italia, Italia, o tu, cui feo la sorte,
Dono infelice di bellezza,"—

proceeds to express his wish that she were either less fair or more powerful.† You, sir (addressing General Garibaldi), have contributed to the endowment of her with that strength which the poet so vehemently longed for, and which we trust will ever defend and protect her beauty from any renewal of foreign aggression." (*Great cheering.*)]

The company then retired to the court chamber, where the General took a seat, and each of the company in succession was presented to him, which, considering an additional 350 guests were invited for the ball, was rather hard work for him to go through so late in the evening. This ceremony over, the Great Hall, which had been by this time cleared, was re-entered, when the freedom of the Company was presented to the General in a massive gold and enamel box, of the value of 100 guineas. It is oblong in form and richly chased on all sides. At each corner are stars of diamonds on blue enamel

* "Autori dell'età media," p. 167. Bendry, Paris, 1840.

† "Deh fossi tu men bella, o almen più forte!"

ground, and in the centre the Fishmongers' arms are beautifully engraved within a border of blue enamel. This box was from Hancock, of Bruton Street. The following inscription was engraved within:—"Presented, on the 21st April, 1864, to General Garibaldi, by the Fishmongers' Company of London, pursuant to a resolution of the Court of Assistants, offering to him the honorary freedom of the Company in testimony of their appreciation of his exalted patriotism, his distinguished valour, and his eminent services in the cause of civil and religious liberty." It also contained a copy of the resolution offering the freedom, beautifully illuminated in colours on vellum.

The PRIME WARDEN, in presenting the freedom, addressed the General in the following terms:—"General Garibaldi. The Fishmongers' Company has now existed for more than 500 years, this year making the fifth century from the date of the earliest existing charter of the Company, although there is reason to believe that it existed long prior to that time. It was established principally for two reasons, both of which will command your entire sympathies—one was that of protecting the weak against the powerful, and the other was that of affording relief to members of the Company who might fall into misfortune. These objects commended themselves to the feelings of the great body of the community, and by their means this and other societies have attained a great amount of importance. Important persons have been pleased from time to time to show their sympathy with the objects of the society, by joining it as honorary members; and we had the honour, as long ago as the time of the great-grandfather of her Majesty, to include the then Prince of Wales as one of the honorary members of the society, and since then, we have been honoured by the addition of many distinguished names on our list, amongst which are those of the Duke of Kent and the Duke of Sussex, whose portraits ornament our hall. Still more recently, the Prince of Wales has done us the great honour of becoming one of our members, and through that circumstance, according to the constitution of the City of London, the young prince who has lately been given to the nation, may be considered as an inchoate Fishmonger, as the children of parents who are free are entitled to take up their freedom at any time they may think fit. We hope that these considerations may induce you, General, to consider it as an acceptable compliment that the freedom of the Company should be offered to you. You have most kindly accepted it, and we feel it as a great honour to have a name associated with it which will at all times be considered the greatest in Italian history, namely, that of General Garibaldi."

General GARIBALDI briefly acknowledged the pleasure it afforded him in accepting the honour which had been done him. (See "Extract from the *Times*," below.)

The General shortly after left, accompanied by the Dowager Duchess of Sutherland.

The rest of the company then commenced dancing, which was kept up to a late hour.—*Morning Post*, 22nd April, 1864.

Extract from THE TIMES Newspaper.

In the evening the Company of Fishmongers entertained the General at dinner in their stately corporate hall at the north end of London Bridge, and afterwards conferred upon him the honorary freedom of their order, enclosed in a handsome gold box, studded with precious stones, of the value of 100 guineas. Covers were laid for 150